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TAGS: [MASS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [AO](#)
SUBJECT: ENGAGING ANGOLA ON DESTROYING EXPIRED MUNITIONS

REF: A) STATE 30482 B) 07 LUANDA 0519

Classified By: Ambassador Dan Mozena for Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: GRA concerns at the highest level over the 2007 arms depot explosion in Maputo offer an opportunity to expand U.S. cooperation with Angola on destruction and/or toward improved physical security and stockpile management of the country's vast stocks of expired munitions. Although bilateral military cooperation with Angola has proven difficult in the past, a recent request made by the Angolan National Police to a USG-funded disarmament NGO (HALO Trust) concerning improved physical security for weapons and munitions stockpiles could provide an opening for Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) cooperation. Post will discretely probe further to gauge the possibility of assistance in this sensitive area. Although direct USG engagement with Angola on the management of expired MANPADS is a non-starter at this point, HALO-Trust - with discreet U.S. support - may be able to engender sufficient trust with the Angolans to assist with MANPADS destruction and/or safeguarding. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Post welcomes Ambassador Bloomfield's message (ref A), concerning a renewed focus on MANPADS threat reduction and bilateral cooperation to secure stores of expired munitions. Angola's long and well financed civil war, which ended in February 2002, left a legacy of substantial stockpiles of aging munitions without proper cataloging, control, or physical security; many of these stockpiles are in urban areas. Although our efforts to foster a better mil-mil relationship with Angola continue, the cold war history of U.S. support for UNITA against the current ruling MPLA diminishes our credibility with military leaders here. As a result, overt U.S. involvement in munitions stockpile management has time and time again proven to be a non-starter with both military and civilian decision makers.

¶3. (C) However, we continue to succeed in munitions destruction efforts in Angola through U.S. funding of HALO Trust. HALO has developed an effective working relationship with the GRA, especially the National Police, which could provide a new avenue to approach the GRA on Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) cooperation. On March 26, HALO officials told Embassy that in mid-March the national police approached them to seek assistance to improve the physical security of weapons and munitions stockpiles and depots, which are expected to grow in size as the police move forward with a national disarmament campaign launched in March 2008.

¶4. (C) HALO has also made significant advances in its weapons destruction programs with the Angolan Armed Forces (ref B). In October 2007 HALO began destroying excess and expired munitions at the main Army depot in Viana, a densely populated suburb of Luanda. This marks HALO's first collaboration with the Army, and HALO reports that the destruction program has received high-level support and

direction from Casa Militar and President Dos Santos. A Casa Militar officer told HALO that President Dos Santos had expressed concern that a Maputo-like explosion could happen in Angola, and ordered the military to take immediate steps to destroy dangerous munitions. With rarely witnessed alacrity, the military turned to Halo for assistance in destroying these munitions. Although initially the Angolan military had sought HALO help in destroying MANPADS, MANPADS were subsequently removed from the list of munitions to be destroyed.

15. (C) Comment: We are encouraged that Angola is looking for assistance to destroy munitions and improve the physical security of its munitions stocks. Ambassador Bloomfield's message is timely, in that DTRA assistance could help expand ongoing efforts to destroy/safeguard excess munitions. Given GRA sensitivities, post proposes to explore discretely with HALO-Trust and DTRA mechanisms for providing greater resources to HALO so it can expand and broaden its efforts to destroy excess munitions, including at some point, we hope, MANPADS.
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